

REMARKS

At the time the current Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 12, 20-25, 29 and 30, allowed claims 34-43, and objected to claims 3-11, 13-19, 26-28 and 31-33. Specifically, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 12, 29 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,552,949 to Silla et al. and claims 20-25 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,519,707 to Clark et al. Reconsideration of the application in view of the remarks and amendments set forth below is respectfully requested.

With regard to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and the allowable subject matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for allowance of claims 34-43 and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3-11, 13-19, 26-28 and 31-33. While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Examiner's rejections, Applicants have chosen to place the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, claims 3, 13, 16, 26 and 31 have been canceled, claims 1, 12, 14, 17, 20, 27 and 29 have been amended and new claim 44 has been added based on the subject matter that the Examiner indicated as allowable.

With regard to the allowable subject matter in claims 3-11, 13-19, 26-28 and 31-33, Applicants have canceled claims 3, 13, 16, 26 and 31 and incorporated the subject matter from each of these claims into their respective independent claims to place them in condition for allowance. Specifically, for the allowable subject matter in claims 3-11, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter previously recited in claims 1 and 3. Accordingly, independent claim 1 and the corresponding dependent claims 2 and 4-11 are believed to be in condition for allowance. With regard to the allowable subject matter in claims

13-15, Applicants have amended independent claim 12 to include the allowable subject matter previously recited in claims 12 and 13. Accordingly, independent claim 12 and the corresponding dependent claims 14 and 15 are believed to be in condition for allowance. With regard to the allowable subject matter in claims 16-19, new independent claim 44 has been added to include the allowable subject matter previously recited in claims 12 and 16. Accordingly, independent claim 44 and the corresponding dependent claims 17, 18 and 19 are believed to be in condition for allowance. With regard to the allowable subject matter in claims 26-28, Applicants have amended independent claim 20 to include the allowable subject matter previously recited in claims 20 and 26. Accordingly, independent claim 20 and the corresponding dependent claims 21-25 and 27-28 are believed to be in condition for allowance. With regard to the allowable subject matter in claims 31-33, Applicants have amended independent claim 29 to include the allowable subject matter previously recited in claims 29 and 31. Accordingly, independent claim 31 and the corresponding dependent claims 30 and 32-33 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Thus, based on the indication by the Examiner, these amendments should be sufficient to overcome the rejections and to place the amended independent claims 1, 12, 20, 29 and 44 and their respective dependent claims in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

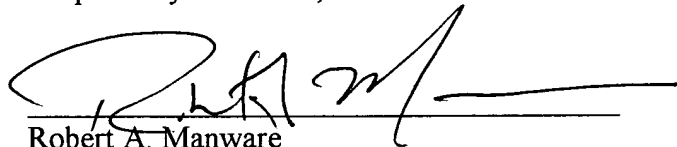
In view of the remarks set forth above, the Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims 1-2, 4-12, 14-15, 17-25, 27-30 and 32-44. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

General Authorization for Extensions of Time and Fee Payment

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, Applicants hereby provide a general authorization to treat this and any future reply requiring an extension of time as incorporating a request therefor. Applicants authorize the Commissioner to charge the appropriate fee for any extension of time to Deposit Account No. 13-3092; Order No. MICS-0120/FLE. Furthermore, in the present response, Applicants have canceled five dependent claims and added one independent claim. As a result, one claim is being added that is an independent claim. Accordingly, Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge the appropriate fee of \$200 (for the additional independent claim) to Deposit Account No. 13-3092; Order No. MICS-0120/FLE. If Applicants have made an error in the fee calculation, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the appropriate amount.

Respectfully submitted,

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